874 in operation admit candidates who possess certificates that they have finished four or six grades of a gymnasium, or a lower agricultural school, and give them from 2 to 3 years of training. The purpose of the lower agricultural schools is to raise the standard of the practical training of farmers and farm-wives. Graduates of elementary schools are automatically admitted for a study period of 2 years. The nine State and eight private schools of this class have an attendance of 1,504 and employ 137 teachers.

871 The government of Lithuania assigns considerable sums for educational purposes. For instance, in 1938 the budget of the Ministry of Education carried the figure of 56,656,891 litas (44,580,045 ordinary, and 12,076,846 extraordinary expenditures), or 16.34 percent of the total National budget.

●532 **The Lithuanian sculptor, Petras Rimša, portrays the "Lietuvos Mokykla" (The Lithuanian School).**

778 and birds; and many others whose meaning is hidden
822 to us grow out of the Lithuanian crosses as the
764 expression of a deep mental attitude which flows from the spiritual life of an inwardly rich people. From the purely artistic angle, in the Lithuanian cross ornamentation, which recalls both a most loyal attachment to faith and a close communion with the dead, we are touched by the compactness with which it grows out of the crosses and blends into a unity with them. (31) In current times, to

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31. V. Jungfer, Ält-Litauen, op. cit., p. 87. V. Jungfer, Hinter den Seen, hinter den Wäldern, Bilder litauischen Volkstums (Königsberg, 1932), pp. 45 and 58.

be sure, it must be recognized how amid a younger and more rationalistic generation the old symbolism of the forefathers is more and more forgotten. Not only does the old custom of setting up crosses disappear; even where wooden crosses are still erected, one meets more and more frequently slender, smooth crosses without any ornamentation, of which only the majestic height still recalls their primitive tradition. (32)

32. A few beautiful and artistically valuable crosses have today been set up in the garden of the Vytautas Museum in Kaunas.

/118/ 2. The Wood Sculpture

• 532 Our survey of the Lithuanian crosses and their chapels would not be complete if we did not include in our presentation those wooden sculptures of the Christian saints which were mentioned above and for whose sake the chapels of the Lithuanian crosses were created.

Lithuanian wood sculpture, to which we thus turn our attention, has, in its origin and its early stages, not been clarified. Romantic research,

including also Brensteyn and Dr. Basanavičius, attributed it to paganism and supported this view with a prohibition of Bishop Tyszkiewicz from the year 1752, which reads: "In many towns in Samogitia highly unskilled wood carvers go about, real destroyers and blasphemers of sculpture, who at their own risk blaspheme the statued of saints, so that they do not look like gods but like Lernean monsters which have nothing at all to do with any sacred tradition in their appearance and features." (33)

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33. Cf. V. Jungfer, Julturbilder aus Litauen (Berlin, 1918), p. 120. The complete Latin text reads: "Plurimis in locis per Samogitiam divagantur imperitissimi sculptores, an verius Iconoclastae et Iconomachi, qui proprio Marte effigies Sanctorum moliantur, non quam speciem deorum, quam monstra Lernaea ab omni sacra Traditione, habitu gestuque ex toto se abhorrentia, vili autem pretio simplicioribus abtrudentes graviter eis imponant, unde optata pullulat, materia nullis vicinorum sectariorum cachinnis. Parochi locorum arguant, increpant tales et confiscent, nisi specialem an Nobis produxerint licentiam."

The current term for these sculptures--in the vernacular dievukai "little gods"--seems to support this theory further. Now we have, however, no reliable support for any anthropomorphic belief among the ancient Lithuanians, and know only that they considered rivers, springs, and forests sacred as the dwelling places of their deities. On the other hand, the term dievukai for these sculptures among a Roman Catholic peasant folk is so self evident as to need no further explanations here. The fact that even today priests occasionally refuse to consecrate these sculptures

if they fall outside the bounds of religious tradition, makes the prohibition of the bishop appear in quite a different light. It is therefore not permissible to infer an unconscious continuation of the images of pagan gods from the artistic incompetence of many wood carvers or their ignorance of religious models. On the contrary, the origin of the peasant wood /119/ sculpture in Lithuania seems by no means to reach that far back and is, as we shall see, closely tied to the religious interpretation of the Western middle ages.

It appears questionable, to be sure, whether Galaunė does not go too far when he places the earliest of these sculptures only at the beginning of the eighteenth century and explains the prohibition of the bishop by the fact that the first primitive and timid beginnings of this new art were conditioned by the baroque age, in which the city churches of the country were decorated with a particular abundance of pictures and sculptures. In them the village artist is supposed to have seen his oldest models, while the preceding Gothic did not so generally nourish religious sculpture in Lithuania and therefore remained without influence on the village. (34) Since all written

34. P. Galaunė, op. cit., p. 175.

sources are lacking, and since no sculptures from earlier periods have remained preserved because of the impermanent nature of the material, which was exposed to every weather, the question of age can probably never be completely solved.

As a matter of fact, although we find in the village sculptures various elements of baroque and even some of Gothic, it is mostly a matter of a primitive art of a peasant stamp, with which one could perhaps compare a few archaic examples from the early period of German art. (35)

35. pp. 176-180.

•532 The Lithuanian sculptures reveal, first, the whole content of a clearly defined peasant culture, occasionally permeated by a certain homeliness of interpretation, and, seen from the standpoint of religious ideas, simplicity of faith. The best of these sculptures bear a serious and solemn character. The artistic means which are employed are elementary. The impression on the observer is frequently very strong and direct. There are among these figures those of block-like monumental effect, where little value is placed on the details, while again in others the details are carefully executed. Precisely the striving to achieve a monumental impression through the simplest presentation of form attests frequently to a sense and great understanding for the demands of sculpture.

/120/ The hair of the figures is symmetrically parted, frequently ornamentally stylized--in other parts of the same sculpture a realistic interpretation may again be realized. In the dress, long drapery predominates. The posture of all these figures is strictly frontal.

The anatomical feeling of the artist is not yet developed. The head of the figures as the seat of the spiritual functions is also favored in its proportions. The hands are too small or too big in relation to the rest of the body, and also of unequal size. In group representations, on the medieval model, the less important figures are scaled much smaller in their proportions than the principal figures. This even applies very often to the pieta representations, in which the scale of the body of Christ corresponds to that of a child, so that the significance of the sorrowing mother will be emphasized.

The artist still struggles for mastery of the material, he is still unable to animate his figures through movement--a small inclination of the head means here a good deal--or, in most cases, to give a deepened spiritual expression to

the faces. Thus it is sometimes quite moving to see how the peasant artist tries to balance this failing through a piling up of the external attributes of pain; witness the heart of the sorrowing mother pierced by seven swords.

Occasionally these sculptures are so simplified that one can recognize only in the typical attributes which saint the artist intended to represent. Here the religious model is completely subordinate; the presentation of form attains its own character. In such cases the artist obviously has elaborated independently and individually his own impressions, taken from the gospels or from sermons. He has then infused his own life into his sculptures. And thus, under his hands, Saint Isidore, that pious Spanish farmhand for whom the angel plowed /121/ while he prayed, became a Lithuanian farmer with straw hat, peasant jacket, and wicker seed-basket. Thus the Mother of God, as she stood upon the serpent and crushed the sins of the world, became for him a Lithuanian peasant woman who has experienced much sorrow and much work, and whose features betray all the harshness of her fate. And thus genuine artistic expression frequently exudes from all the primitiveness and traditional restraint. In such creations the people shows its own face. In them is mirrored the culture of the country and the mental attitude of its inhabitants. From these two elements the peasant sculptures are to be understood. The connecting link, however, is the religious spirit which created them.

We know today the models for a large number of these village sculptures, know that the blessing Christ holding the globe has its model in a picture in the cathedral of Vilna, just as does Saint Kazimir--know that the sculptures of Jesus bearing the cross owe their origin to a small statue in the chapel of Šnikpiškis near Vilna, and that the standing Jesus with the chained hands

goes back to a wooden statue in the Antokol church, (35) but basically these things are not

35. pp. 176-180.

at all so important. For the nameless artists of the Lithuanian villages who saw such models on their pilgrimages or in pictures of saints, in woodcuts and copper etchings in religious books--they recreated these things as their own artless sense dictated, gave them their own forms and their own primitive symbolism. What had been created by the Gothic and by baroque ostentation, what the art of wood-carving produced in the Western countries out of its own feeling for style, in drama and movement, in the highest refinement of inner expression--all that was changed by these thoughtful, pious, and quiet men into simple and heavy forms, into calm and as it were motionless masses, into quiet observation and epic narrative. It was as if the hand which had guided the plow by day was also heavy in the evening when it grasped the knife. In observing these /122/ things one should never forget with what infinitely simple tools these sculptures were produced--only with hatchet and knife. They are carved from a single piece; only the appendages are usually attached.

All their models are borrowed from the spiritual and pictorial world of the Western Middle Ages, the form of the pieta as well as the group of St. George with the dragon, who became in Lithuania the patron saint of agriculture--only that here, too, independent deviations from the model are again to be noted, for St. George in these representations carries no banner with a red cross, but occasionally has the cross on his cloak like the knights of the orders of the Middle Ages. Even the most common of these sculptures, the sorrowing Christ (Lithuanian: rupintojėlis

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or smutkelis), is already known from a wood sculpture of the German Middle Ages around 1500. (36)

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36. Dr. Willi Burger, Altdeutsche Holzplastik (Berlin, 1926), p. 179. Cf. further: Franz Wolter and Willi Burger, Die mittelalterliche Holzplastik in Deutschland (Munich, 1924).

But precisely this sculpture, about whose meaning many pious legends are woven, has become quite an original possession of the people through its treatment by the peasant artists, and has experienced many transformations and variations. One sees it above all in Samogitia again and again, in villages, at crossroads, by trees in the forests. It seems as if just this figure of the sorrowing Christ with the crown of thorns, who rests Himself, exhausted, His head supported in His hand, His elbow on His knee, particularly expresses the contemplative nature of the Lithuanian peasant and has attained an individual form from the sorrow of a people over centuries-long slavery and from the melancholy of the landscape. This sculpture as no other has inspired the carvers to individual creation and has attained inner animation. At times a really unearthly mood speaks from it, which shows how deeply the artist lost himself in his idea. (*)

(*) Cf. on this point the poem of Putinas-Mykolaitis.

Lithuanian wood sculpture did not take over and elaborate all the pictorial subjects which came from the West. To be sure, the number of saints which are represented is very great, but /123/ certain favorite motifs return again and again. Besides those already named there are St. John of Nepomuk, always in clerical robes with a

532 skullcap, in his right hand a crucifix, in his left a palm branch--St. Anthony, in monk's garb, in his left hand a crucifix, in his right hand a lily as the symbol of innocence--very seldom St. Kazimir, in royal robes with a crown on his head, in his hands a cross and a lily--more frequently St. Rokhus. Since the wood carver borrowed the features from the men of his surroundings, we occasionally meet, along with pure Lithuanian types, Russian and Tatar types also. The female saints frequently wear the Sunday dress of the Lithuanian peasant women. Especially often we see St. Barbara with a crown on her head, in her right hand a sword, in her left hand a chalice with the Host; and St. Katharina, at her left the wheel on which she was bound at the command of Emperor Maxentius; also Saints Anna and Agatha. The latter is always represented with a loaf of bread in her hand. Her veneration seems to go back to non-Christian origins, for the bread consecrated to her, which is carefully preserved throughout the year, brings help in case of fire and is carried around the burning farm.

The figures of these saints are frequently housed in groups in the little chapels of the roofed crosses, sometimes more than ten figures next to each other. There are also others for whose placement particular locations are favored: St. John of Nepomuk at bridges, John the Baptist with Christ at rivers and lakes, St. Isidore in the fields, or St. Florian near city houses which he is supposed to protect from fire. (37) John of

37. A. Rukštelė, op. cit., p. 84.

Nepomuk and John the Baptist are both joined together by the people under the name Joneliai (plural of the intimate form for John).

Like the wood sculptures of all peoples the Lithuanian ones are painted--especially for pro-

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tection against the weather--and from this they often obtain a peculiar charm. But /124/ the poor Lithuanian wood carver could not procure those expensive paints with which the South German artist decorated their sculptures. He had to be satisfied with what the merchant in the nearest little town offered him. Red, blue, white, green, even silver and gold are used, not always tastefully, but at times with a decided aesthetic feeling and sense of the effect of colors.

Thus these sculptures are very uneven from the point of view of their artistic value. We know some that one can compare easily with those of the West, and which one almost does not want to attribute to a simple peasant, and also others to which the words of the pious bishop still apply today--whose faces are distorted and hardly human. But the best of these village artists have always worked out of an inner vocation, and their creations have arisen from a longing for higher spirituality. What we know of the artists themselves, is not much. The few God-carvers whom we know are pious old people, often eccentrics. They do not belong to the wealthy of the village; their work does not yield profit. When th y finally close their eyes, they will hardly leave any successors, for their art, too, is disappearing, as the crosses decay which are their witnesses.

3. Woodcuts and Paintings

In very close relationship to the village sculpture stands an area of artistic activity which is hardly known to wider circles and even less appreciated--the peasant woodcut. It, too, goes back to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Its models were altar and church paintings, above all however those little pictures of saints which were distributed from Vilna as copper etchings and usually represented copies of famous paintings, such as the Crucifixion of Dürer,

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the St. Katharina of Rubens, and many others. The creator of such woodcuts favored above all /125/ representations of miracle-working saints, which were eagerly bought by the peasants at great indulgence festivals. Thus this art, too, stand exclusively in the service of the religious idea.

The Škapliernikai of the church villages, who produced and sold these simple woodcuts, used for their work very soft wood--usually linden--since their only tool was a knife. The board was smoothed and then received a coating of chalk or wax. Now the portions which were to remain white on the paper were cut out of the wood, while the actual drawing was carved in relief. The figures received a strong contour line; shadows were produced by a simple stroke technique. The woodcuts were printed without the aid of any sort of press, simply by hand. Thus, as Galaunė stresses, their technique can be compared only with the German individual woodcuts of the fifteenth century, and as a matter of fact Germany was the sponsor of this technique in Lithuania. Since the prints were made on ordinary paper and the coloring was done with inks of very little permanence, hardly any old originals have been preserved. But the number of subjects as well as their popularity among the people speaks for their wide distribution. Their popularity is proved by the fact mentioned by Galaunė, (38) that after the emergence of lithography in

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38. Cf. for the section on the village woodcuts and paintings, Galaunė, op. cit., pp. 231-238, as well as the literature referred to there. Further: P. Galaunė, Lietuvių liaudies raižinių katalogas (Catalogue of the Woodcuts of Lithuanian Folk Art) (Kaunas, 1927), as well as the pertinent chapter in A. Rukštelė loc. cit., pp. 41-48.

532 Germany the best-loved of the Lithuanian woodcuts were lithographed there and exported to Lithuania. A reprinting in Warsaw, in 1921, of the blocks available there--nearly all the blocks were taken to Warsaw by Polish connoisseurs--contains 42 Lithuanian woodcuts and 24 Polish woodcuts of a similar style.

The home of the Lithuanian woodcut is the province of Samogitia. Here even existed in Kalvarija even at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a school where one could learn this art, which was practiced in the country town Darbenai up to the middle of the century. All but a few of the names of the producers /126/ of these woodcuts are today forgotten. From the middle of the century on, the village woodcut was supplanted by industrially produced lithographs and chromolithographs, which we find today in every farmhouse.

Just as the village sculptures, the old woodcuts, as we can see in those examples that have been preserved, deviated sometimes quite far from the religious models. And in this characteristic transformation lies also their significance for Lithuanian folk art. Often the carvers left out parts of the original model in order to put in their place familiar patterns, often even stylizations of plants and trees. We find even independent groupings of saints in some woodcuts. Everything that was said in the section on village sculpture concerning standardization of expression, proportions, and means of representation applies also to the woodcuts. Since the laws of perspective were not known to the woodcut makers, they created their figures on a double plane, placing those figures which were supposed to stand in the foreground on top of the other figures. The background of the pictures is uniform, often enlivened by small ornaments.

Concerning the artistic value of these wood-

532 cuts, too, practically the same can be said as about the sculptures: along with very primitive imitations there are those of great beauty and subtlety of interpretation. From a cultural point of view they are of interest in the way artistic impressions coming from the outside world are taken up and transferred to a completely different plane of feeling and expression through a peasant interpretation which is basically inadequate for them.

Along with these woodcuts there was also developed in Lithuania, in the nineteenth century, a type of peasant religious painting, of which a few pieces have been preserved. They, too--insofar as they are not simple copies of church paintings--reveal a fresh naivete of feeling and deep faith. Thus in one of these pictures the eye /127/ of God is represented, framed by clouds. Out of these clouds two hands reach down to earth, from one of which seed falls upon the field, while the other blesses two kneeling men with bread. A landscape with a few trees provides the background. From this picture, which is not associated with any model--and in this, to be sure, represents an exception--speaks a thoroughly independent interpretation of great charm.

The peasant artist usually had at his disposal only two or three colors. In most cases he first completed the drawing and then painted it in. Through the influence of time the colors have greatly changed, so that many of these pictures exhibit quite singular tones.

Unfortunately only a very short span of development was allotted to this kind of religious painting in Lithuania. It was destroyed by the same technique to which also the village woodcuts fell victim.

The areas of religious folk art in Lithuania treated thus far have only in the last few years

532 been to any greater extent. This happened in connection with the emergence of a new nationalism which is intent at tracing the spiritual forces of its own country as they are manifested in folk art and folk customs--on the other hand through the development of expressionism, whose representatives created mood and suggestive animation out of the art of the primitive. All external phenomena are reduced by expressionism to the last degree of their simplicity. External experiences yield to inner spiritual phenomena. Thus it is no wonder that the products of Lithuanian folk art, above all the peasant wood sculptures, at the international art exhibition in Monza, in 1925, had an unusual success. It was precisely the contrast between the naivete of presentation and the power of their expression which found understanding appreciation and recognition.

/128/ The expressionistic elements mentioned by us are characteristic not only of the area of religious folk art which we have treated so far. They are manifested with equal strength in the secular areas of peasant art. We have thus come to the extensive field of handicraft, which has been independently developed in Lithuania in the manifold forms of wood carving, weaving, pottery, decorative painting, and many others, and whose products have found loving appreciation and recognition especially among German artists and scholars.

531 4. The Home and in the Village
322 Woodwork, Ceramics, Ironwork, Decorative Painting

In considering these branches of folk art, too, we must proceed first from wood carving, for the forest gave the Lithuanian from olden times everything which he needed for his life in the way of household articles--from the wicker cradle to the towering cross in his cemetery.

346 of this type, all of which date from the fifteenth century, are still preserved today in Kaunas. The oldest is the Vytautas church (Franciscan church) built in 1400, which the grand duke erected in memory of the recognition of Lithuanian independence by Jogaila. The history of its founding is set down on a marble plaque near the main entrance. The interior decoration is very simple. 532] Noteworthy is a picture by Kalpokas over the main altar, whose upper half represents the ascension of Mary, while the lower half shows Vytautas with his soldiers at the Vorskla, as he pledges himself with a solemn oath to build the church. The grand duke gave this church to the Franciscan order, whose monastery then stood on the site of the present city hospital. (6) Although the church /152/ was

113] 6. Kan. J. Tumas, "Iš Vytauto bažnyčios istorijos" (From the History of the Vytautas Church), Iliustr. Lietuva, Vol. 1927, Nos. 15 and 16.

destroyed in the seventeenth century by the Swedes, in 1812 by the French, and in the middle of the nineteenth century was transformed into a Russian church, it remained the only one of the old churches which faithfully preserved its Gothic character. Its peculiar tower stems from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the facade decoration of the side wings from the same period.

The construction of the gigantic cathedral of the archbishop (Cathedral of Peter and Paul) also reaches back into a very early period. In the renewal of its privileges, of 1503, it is mentioned that the church was built "in very old times, almost at the beginning of Christianity," and was richly endowed. (7) In its size alone--

7. Valančius, see above.

it is 84 meters long, 34 meters wide, and 28 meters

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high--it makes a powerful impression. After the great fire of 1770, which left only the foundation walls standing, it was rebuilt in a different form. Probably the church was originally built with two towers (in its present form the one tower interferes with the symmetry of the exterior). In the nineteenth century a side chapel was added to the south front by Bishop Paliulionis; it contains pictures by Tyrolian artists and a beautifully carved altar. Further to be mentioned is the building of the cathedral library, which reminds one of the Marienburg castle. The interior of the cathedral was completely covered over by later artistic styles after its reconstruction: the pilasters, the columns, and above all the numerous altars sparkle in the magnificence of the baroque, whose animation is increased still more by numerous rococo forms. But, as K. Jasenas correctly points out in his art history, a counterbalance is created by the powerful compactness of the main altar (from the year 1775), which subdues the total impression into serious and mighty solemnity. (8) Precisely this

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8. Jasenas, Visuotinė meno istorijz /General History of Art/, V, p. 267.

altar, between whose Corinthian columns tower gigantic figures of the apostles, has a particularly majestic effect. Thus the impression which proceeds from this cathedral is unusually strong, and the spirit of medieval piety and religious artistic instinct becomes directly alive. The church paintings were mostly /153/ painted in the middle of the nineteenth century by Elviro Andriolli, an Italian artist who settled in Lithuania and was naturalized.

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Considerably younger than the cathedral, but also still stemming from the fifteenth century, the Seminary Church of St. George first meets the eye of anyone who approaches the city from the river.

1 [in Cathedral of Peter and Paul in Kaunas -- Analyst]

946

monastery was built according to the plans of the architect Lodovico Fredo, who was later followed by Pietro Putini. (16) Thus arose a baroque structure

16. Kairiūkštytė-Jacyniene, op. cit., p. 19.

on the Italian model of imposing grandeur. It required means unheard of at that time. The cut stone which covers the facade of the church and the entrance gate came from abroad, Danzig and Riga supplied the iron, the marble quarries of Cracow supplied the white, red, and black marble that covers the whole interior of the church up to the principal cornice. It was carried by waterway via Warsaw and Danzig to Königsberg, and transported on from there in wagons.

Of particular interest from the point of view of art history is the completely symmetrical composition of the whole monastery, as well as the six-sided ground plan of the church, "a highly rare, almost unique case in architecture." (17) The

17. Ibid., p. 128.

tremendous, towering dome, through which an abundance of light pours onto the main altar, while the side chapels fade in a half light, makes a powerful impression on the entering visitor, and draws his gaze upward. All the ceilings of the church[1] and of all the neighboring rooms are decorated with exuberant stuccos and fresco paintings, in which the whole art of the boldest Italian perspective painting comes alive. In their splendid colors live the traditions of Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese. These frescoes undoubtedly belong among the most beautiful and artistically most valuable not only of Lithuania, but of the closer eastern countries in general. Of the painters three are known, Ferdinando delle Croce, Angelo Palloni da Compi, and Delbene, among whom the last should be especially mentioned.

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[1] [of Monastery of Pažaislis near Kaunas -- Analyst]

B. Painting and Sculpture

532 1. Development up to the first World War.

217 The palaces of the Radvilas, of the Paz, of the Sapiehas, and many others today lie in ruins. Only one or the other ruin still reminds one in its gigantic proportions of the power of the earlier lords of the land. With the castles of Lithuania, the precious store of pictures which they contained was also destroyed at the same time. Thus in 1830 the picture gallery of Princess Sapieha went up in flames. The art collection of the Radvilas, too, was half destroyed. The uprising /171/ of the year 1863 destroyed the most valuable portion of the archaeological collection of the Museum of Vilna. Valuable objects of art were removed by the Russians to St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev, where they were exhibited in galleries, if they were not burned; the last happened, for example, to the remains of the Sapieha gallery, at the command of Czar Nicolas I. The first World War, however, brought with it the greatest destruction. With it a centuries old tradition was carried to the grave, never to be reawakened to life.

532 For these reasons the new Lithuanian painting grew in a completely independent soil, without tradition or connection with the artistic past of the country. The young Lithuanian painters sought and found the soul of their people in the nature of their homeland and in their heroic past. Sometimes they also built further along the line of the old peasant folk art, which extends into our own time. Around the turn of the nineteenth century /sic/ artistic life in Lithuania achieved its first blossoming. In the year 1907 the first Lithuanian art society was founded in Vilna.

532 In order to understand the beginning of Lith
186 uanian artistic life, which was concentrated in the old capital of the country, one must consider to what extent this spiritual life--no matter whether

7: Jungfer -196 S.-4,5(no date)1938 RB5LithuaniansRB5
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it had to do with painting, poetry, or science--was focused in a single point--the national idea. The idea of the liberation of the people from the Russian yoke, at first not yet conceived of as absolute governmental independence, first gained real form at the moment when the buried springs of national consciousness again began to flow. The beginnings of pictorial art also stood partially in the service of this idea. In sagas and fairy tales, in folk songs, in wood carving and weaving of the villages lay hidden the elements to which that first generation of artists now first gave the concept of a native creativity by bringing them into consciousness. The folk art /172/ thus became a symbol of their own worth, but also a symbol of all that which separated and distinguished their own people from its neighbors. From such ideas arose the great picture book of the Lithuanian Crosses which was published in 1912 by the art society in Vilna. Along with impressive drawings by Antanas Jaroševičius, it contains an introductory essay by Dr. Basanavičius, who with the means of historical research pursued the same purpose--to awaken awareness of the value of their own folk art by carrying it forward from an archaic past and thus throwing a special light on it. The meaning of history became thus a second root of these efforts. From the deeds of a glorious past the ideals of the present were easily derived, above all the lietmotif that Lithuania had once been a powerful state and for that reason must not perish.

To be sure, such ideas did not affect all artists to the same degree and were expressed differently at different times. The glow of these ideas faded for many who were far from home. Foreign themes gained in influence; the force of Western artistic trends--realism and impressionism--allowed the spring to be forgotten from which an independent Lithuanian art could have been created--the folk art.

532 Only much later, under the imprint of expression-
186 ism, did a change set in, as will be shown later.

A third factor, however, retained for all these artists its particular tone, no matter whether they stayed long years abroad or worked in the homeland. This third factor was the earth--the Lithuanian countryside, from which they all sprang and which, in its thousandfold moods, constantly welled up in their soul anew--the little dreamy village, the babbling brook, the wide expanse of the snow-covered landscape in the winter. Thus the countryside of the homeland became a symbol of all that for which one fought.

532 /173/ The themes for that first generation of artists were thereby partially given. We see this for example in the picture "Vision" by Antanas Zmuidzinavičius (born 1876). A mystical rider gallops along the horizon of a nocturnal cemetery landscape. In his right hand he swings a sword. But the rider is a symbolization of Vytis, the old Lithuanian knight at arms, and the picture breathes not so much a romantic mood of the past as a prophecy of a future. Thus the success which Zmuidzinavičius achieved at just that time with his romantic realism, with which he brought to life the past of the people, is completely understandable. At the same time he became the representative of a realistic, more academic, school of landscape painting, which was to dominate not only the first beginnings of Lithuanian art. He received his training on long journeys to Germany, Paris, and Italy. In 1906 he returned to Vilna. We possess excellent landscapes by this artist--in some the peaceful, dreamy beauty of the Lithuanian forests and lakes finds its true expression. Many are not "realistic" in the usual sense of the word, and from the best speaks that nuoširdumas with which the Lithuanian language describes the genuineness of a deep feeling and a lyric mood.

Nevertheless in an art which proceeds primar-

•532 ily by way of recounting the past there exists the danger of making concessions to public taste. I am not thinking only of several paintings in the war museum in which individual events in the country's history are illustrated, as it were, and in which obviously something other than a purely artistic purpose has been pursued. In general Lithuanian painting from that time on up to the most recent past has moved along the line of realism--impressionism. That conservative element which we have already observed in the development of architecture applies also, mutatis mutandis, to painting. Undoubtedly this development, which has been overcome by now, contained a second danger impairing the appreciation of art by a still untrained public, /174/ in that the attention of the observer remained directed predominantly to the story behind the picture.

Apart from Zmuidzinavičius there were independent personalities who stood out in that first generation of artists and who went their own ways. In the water colors of Kajetonas Šklērius-Šklērys (died 1932) was reflected all the pictorial magic of the atmosphere whose chamr is pursued by the artist with sensual refinement. Brilliance of colors is shown especially by his Italian landscapes, the results of long trips to the south. It was just this landscape of the south, in which the sun throws objects into relief up to the far distances, that gave the impressionist the subjects for a series of beautiful water colors. Side by side with this unproblematic harmony stands the mood of the Lithuanian landscape--in gardens outside the city that are covered with snow, birches along the road, accompanied by a tender, dreamy basic harmony, sections of autumn landscapes, finely toned down in their colors, everyth ng seen with a great sensitivity and directness of natural experience. From the still-lifes of this artist, too, speaks a high, colorful culture, sometimes per-

• 532 meated by a visionary mood. His portraits appear less characteristic.

A strong personality is the mark of Adomas Varnas (born 1879), whose creativity has passed through various stages of development. He, too, like Zmuidzinavičius, began with symbolic presentations, and, remained faithful to realism his whole life long, but he achieved thereby a feeling for form all his own, a new, heightened interpretation of reality, which led him to ever greater simplification in his modelling of the objective world. This is also evident in his coloration. In his later pictures his distance from nature becomes greater; lyric contemplation gives way to a more rational interpretation which perhaps leaves one cooler, but which gives the artist's own personal note to his interpretations of the Lithuanian countryside. After long years of silence, during which he devoted all his powers to the mastering of the Lithuanian art of woodwork, above /175/ all the roofed crosses, he presented to the public creations in which a stronger, more concise method of handling the brush is followed. The descriptive power of Varnas is most strongly shown in his portraits, which, as far as characterization and reproduction of personality are concerned, belong among the best that has yet been created by Lithuanian painters. His heads gain their effect through their greater than lifesize scale, through great simplification of details, and the art of intensification. The head of the gymnasium director Žilinskis, with its gaze turned inward and its deep thoughtfulness, is a fine example; and the self-portrait of the artist with his wife, created as early as 1912, is very impressive--two heads pressing forward in animation with wide open eyes and hair flowing against the storm. The element of motion is splendidly depicted here, the heads so near that we think we can feel their breath, while everything in the distance is dissolved in indefinite tones in which

•532 one feels the waves of the sea rushing forward. (29)

[113] 29. On Varnas cf. also Ign. Šlapelis, "Adomo Varno kūrybos keliais" (Following the Paths of the Creations of Adomas Varnas), Iliustr. Lietuva, 1927, No. 12.

Among the most gifted impressionists of the older generation belongs Petras Kalpokas (born 1880). He too, like many others of the Lithuanian artists, spent long years in Switzerland and Italy, a fact which did not remain without influence on his development. Galaunė writes of him: "He is an impressionist of great style, free to the point of boldness in his technique. His portraits betray the influence of Italian painting. In his Lithuanian landscapes he knew how to let the essential features of this unique nature stand out. In his 'Temptation of Christ' and in his 'Pieta' he tries to reproduce the psyche of the Lithuanian people." (30) Kalpokas had already made a name for

[113] 30. P. Galaunė, l'Art lithuanien (Malmö, 1934), p. 34.

himself in Russia before the first World War. At the outbreak of the World War a large number of his pictures were on their way to an exhibition in Munich and, unfortunately, fell victim to the events of the war. Among his best works belong a number of landscapes and his self-portrait.

/176/ Finally to be reckoned among the older generation is Jonas Šileika, who underwent his training in Munich, a strong, artistic temperament, completely dominated by his joy in colorful compositions and decorative effects, in his portraits a realist with a striving for spirituality and animation (Portrait of a Lady, 1925, Čiurlionis Gallery). His portrait of the writer Žemaitė was honored with a prize in Chicago in 1920.

532 Among the artists who found themselves exclusively drawn to sculpture, Petras Rimša (born 1881), who stood close to academic naturalism, found early recognition. Rimša is one of the artists in whose creations the social and political distress of his people before the first World War found a special emphasis, and whose participation in the actual problems of his time also was much more active than that of many others. He became known to broad circles through his sculpture "The Battle," in which the Lithuanian knight at arms is shown in battle with the Polish eagle, which he defeats--a sculpture that aroused such strong indignation in Polish circles that the artist himself destroyed it in a fit of rage. A second famous sculpture, "The Lithuanian School," calls back into memory that period of Russian suppression in which (1864-1904) Lithuanian books and Lithuanian schools were forbidden. It shows a mother at the spinning wheel teaching her small son how to read. Quite apart from the highly impressive subject, the characterization of the two figures is also well executed artistically. Later the artist proceeded to enlivening his sculptures by the use of popular decorative ornamentation. Thus sometimes very original works were produced. From his last years, finally, date several medals and bronze plaques, which combine a clear composition with fine stylization.

Along with Rimša, Juozas Zikaras became known. The latter stood under the influence of the development of the nineteenth century, in which sculpture was completely /Unnumbered page with illustration--Pieta/ /177/ separated from architecture, left the realm of monumentalforms, and approached painting through expression. Thus his art remained small art in the sense of impressionism. In this realm Zikaras created various well executed sculptures, medals, and bas-reliefs. A bold attempt was

•532 his satirical stylization of a "modern madonna," a bas-relief that shows a modern woman in a short skirt, the fashion at that time, and crossed legs, who regards her child with an expression "like a mother who does not love her child, but only tolerates it like an uninvited guest." (31)

[113] 31. Ig. Šlapelis, "Iš J. Mackevičiaus ir J. Zikaro parodos," Meno kultūra, 1928, No. 1, pp. 18-19.

532 543 Therewith the first generation of artists, whose works were represented at the first Lithuanian art exhibition in 1907, has been briefly characterized in its outstanding personalities. No less than 23 artists were represented with 242 pictures. The paintings were sent from far and wide--they came from Russia, Poland, Switzerland, Italy, Tyrol, and France--for very many of these artists lived at that time outside of the country. At the head of the art association, which in the following years sponsored a number of further exhibitions, was together with Rimša, Antanas Zmiudzinavičius, one of the most active champions of that generation of artists, who placed his organizational talents completely at the service of this idea. (32) They were joined by a third, the

[113] 32. Vydūnas, Litauen (Tilsit, 1916), p. 116.

composer and painter Mykolas Čiurlionis, an artist who, through his creations, at that time drew to himself the attention of the leading Russian artistic circles.

532 Born in 1875, the son of an organist in Druskininkai, Čiurlionis was accepted as a boy into the private orchestra of Prince Oginski in Plungė. His unusual musical talent and his likeable character caused the prince to send him to the conservatories of Warsaw and Leipzig. In 1901 we find

him, returned from Germany, in Warsaw, where he supported himself after the death of his patron by giving music lessons. Around this /178/ time began his meteoric rise as a painter and draftsman. In 1907 he moved to Vilna, two years later to St. Petersburg. Here in the center of Russian artistic life his creativity reached its high point. But quite suddenly a rapid decline took place. A serious illness overtook him, and a dissolution of his mental powers set in. Thirty-six years old, he died in 1910 in a sanatorium.

The self-willed personality of Čiurlionis reflects like a prism the peculiar character of his people which tends towards mysticism. From his creations speaks the elementary man as he grows out of the Lithuanian countryside without inwardly separating himself from it, the man from whose being the broad plain of the East shines forth and blends with him, the way the whole nature which surrounds him blends with flowers, mountains, and rocks. On this soil his special artistic quality is growing. The deeply musical and rhythmical element that carried him forward made him strive for the direct expression for his artistic revelations. Thus he consciously remounced everything conventional, even renounced the forcing, and thus the dulling, of his inner vision through the medium of the material. Filled with a cosmic religiosity, he transferred the means of music to color and created preludes, humns, sonatas, and symphonies. His last work was a tempera painting--Hymn to the Setting Sun.

From the lyric mood, however, he proceeded to the contemplation of pure form. Thus he saw the reality which lies behind things, and which manifested itself to him in geometrical laws. He fashioned with infinitely delicate colors his imaginary landscape in a noble composition of unreal mountains and broad plains, and filled the space with transparent forms, from which only the rhythmical and

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geometrical principle of the material still shines forth. The human form is here of necessity excluded. Heinrich Schaeder, to whom we owe several very fine observations concerning Čiurlionis, stresses above all the cosmic element /179/ manifested in his pictures, for example in the "Pyramids": "Pure crystal forms, pyramids and obelisks, become plane surfaces and the creators of their own space. A spring wind is thrown between the many arms of two candelabra and carries long slanting streaks of light toward the sky. A powerful sight: on the globe rests 'Rex' the ruler, a transparent, straight-lined, hemmed-in surface which projects upward through two celestial spheres. Clouds swirl in the lower, in the upper armies of comets race toward the calm of the midpoint. Here the stormy movement of the spheres is truly creased." Or the artist wanders through the signs of the zodiac. "In endless distances, in unearthly worlds arise the hieratically rigid forms of Virgo, of Aquarius. And above them stands their constellation." (33)

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33. Heinrich Schaeder, "Čiurlionis--ein litauischer Maler," Das Land Ob. Ost (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1917), pp. 393-395.

Next to such visions are simpler, deeply human allegories and symbols. The symbol of friendship--a precious crystal, presented with closed eyes and the touching movement of devotion; fate--a child on a blooming meadow, an unreal, otherwordly form and landscape--overhead a black bird with gigantic, outspread wings. The number of such explanations could be increased, but little would thus be gained for the understanding of this painter; for just as in all the other pictures, the material here is not seen as material but projects into a second plane of reality which borrows from ours only the external forms. At times the force of this master is also expressed in creations that

are completely rooted in the countryside of his homeland and are completely filled with its mood, like his "Cemetery in Samogitia." But here, too, the deeper symbol of the impermanence of everything worldly grows out of the landscape which he fashions.

What affects the sensitive observer in all these pictures so strongly is the deep inner necessity to which they owe their existence, this struggle of the soul for a sublime view /180/ of the cosmos. Čiurlionis belongs among those men who receive their light from within, like Beethoven and Rilke, for example. What they create does not come about through certain impressions of the outer world which are then artistically elaborated, but everything is inner vision. An irresistible force drives them to the representation of their visions. How strong this inner force was in Čiurlionis is proved by the fact, told by his brother, that the sick artist even in his last months, in the night, when everybody in the sanatorium had gone to rest, painted uninterruptedly by candlelight until dawn. (34)

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34. The literature concerning Čiurlionis is relatively extensive. It consists principally of essays in various art periodicals. Among others may be mentioned the special Čiurlionis number of the periodical Naujoji Romuva, Vol. 5, 1935, No. 42; further the brief sketch by Galaunė in l'Art lithuanien, op. cit., pp. 12-13; as well as the little article by the same author: "M.K. Čiurlionies galerijos istorija" (History of the Ciurlionis Gallery). Bičiūnas wrote a biography of Čiurlionis. In German: Schaeder, op. cit., and V. Jungfer, Hinter den Seen, hinter den Wäldern Königsberg, 1932), pp. 65-69. The great Čiurlionis monograph published by P. Galaunė in 1938, which above all contains valuable unpublished picture material, could not yet be consulted.

∞∞ not yet be consulted.

532 Thus Čiurlionis art is unique. He is one of those rare masters who even in great nations are born only once in a great while. The largest portion of his paintings--148 creations in oil, tempera, and pastel, and 35 graphic works--is found today in the State Gallery of Paintings at Kaunas, located in the Vytautas Museum. His style, i.e. the outward form of the representation, was taken over by Šimonis, who also resolves reality into geometric figures in many of his pictures. His colored compositions radiate great brilliance. Simonis made a name for himself especially as an illustrator. (35)

[113] 35. Cf. Jean Mauclère, Sous le ciel pâle de Lithuanie (Paris, 1936), pp. 52-54.

2. Recent Trends

The first spring of Lithuanian art came to an end in the first World War, which had a crippling effect on all spiritual creativity and scattered the Lithuanian artists all over the world. Nevertheless through the war several of these painters became known also in Germany, for example Varnas and Zmuidzinavičius, whose pictures at the great Lithuanian exhibition in Königsberg, in 1918, received various expressions of recognition in the German press. (36) Only after the end of the war

36. For example the Kön. Hartungsche Ztg. of August 27, 1918.

did the rest of the artists return. /181/ The beginning of new statehood gave to their creativity a broader framework. At that time (1919) there arose a "Lithuanian Art Association" which took over the heritage of the first art association but at the same time also broadened significantly its

532 [517] circle of responsibility: it called into being a theater, an opera, and a music school--institutions which the state took over--and combined within itself all the creative forces of that period which were aiming with great energy and much idealism to create the basis for a new artistic culture within the framework of the new national life.

537 874 In the year 1924 the founding of an art school took place. At its head was the painter Justinas Vienožinskis, who, although he belonged to the older generation, pursued with great freshness the new artistic trends of Western Europe but at the same time directed attention to the values which were lying dormant in the Lithuanian folk art. A painter of colorful culture, himself a product of the impressionism of the previous century, he found a style of his own. Along with him there came as teachers a number of the older artists. In spite of unfavorable material conditions the art school today has well beyond 100 students and has become an independent factor in Lithuanian cultural life. Its director is the well-known art historian and critic Ignas Šlapelis.

532 Adomas Galdikas (born 1893), who began with drawing but found his real field as a painter, also works as a professor at the art school. A thoroughly self-willed artist, he did not remain untouched by the various new trends of European painting, but always followed independent paths. His individuality grows out of his inner ties to Lithuanian folk art. Unusually versatile--along with his landscapes and portraits his opera decorations must also be mentioned--Galdikas underwent a lively artistic development. It is characterized by the Frenchman Waldemar George, who /182/ writes in a monograph dedicated to the artist: "By approaching the archaic expression of religious folk art, Galdikas seeks something other than only an assortment of colored tones and lines. This confrontation with folk art allows him to be con-

1 [Lithuanian Art Association, 1919 -- Analyst]

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scious of his earthly art. Galdikas . . . recognized that all objective searching in art is meaningless . . . This living faith, this power to see and understand the divine principles of nature, led him to a Lithuanian atmosphere filled with mystery." (37)

[113] 37. V. Vizgirda, "Tapyba ir skulptūra Lietovuje" (Painting and Sculpture in Lithuania), Naujoji Romuva, Vol. V, No. 10/11, March 17, 1935, p. 248.

Except in the French Museum Jeo de Paume, works of Galdikas are found in the museums of Kaunas and Riga.

Vienožinskis and Galdikas thus already belong essentially to a new generation, whose educators they become. In their ateliers a number of talented young artists received their training. The latter joined together later into a special group of "Independents" and thus separated from the "Lithuanian Artists' Association," which continued to include the artists of the older generation. Nevertheless the difference in goals of the two groups does not seem so strong as might be concluded from their names. Even among the "Independents" we do not encounter radical nor extremist tendencies. Impressionism clearly has an after effect among them, too.

In 1932 a new group, "Ars," split off from the group of "Independents" under the leadership of Galdikas; its efforts derived from completely new ideas, as appears from a proclamation which was published at the first exhibition of this group in the same year. (38)

[113] 38. Naujoji Romuva, No. 45, of November 6, 1932 (Vol. III).

Since this proclamation is of special interest

532 for the most recent development of Lithuanian painting, a part of it is reproduced here; "The world, above all our own /183/ people, has entered into a new epoch. After a whole five hundred years we have again entered into competition with the great nations of Europe. We have looked around us and have come to the conviction that the lack of deeper artistic efforts as well as the imitation of artistic forms long outgrown is destroying our art."

In these spirited utterances we see a sharp renunciation of everything that is still connected with the naturalism and impressionism of the nineteenth century. The director of the state gallery of paintings, Paulius Galaunė, expresses himself in a similarly sharp manner in the same almanac. He at first discusses the reasons why the so-called "high art" of Lithuania cannot look back on any past, while the real values of the artistic culture of the people lie concealed in folk art; and he then continues: "it is a peculiar fact that beginning with the first Lithuanian art exhibition our artists have appeared not as children of their own race, but as 'Europeanized' copyists of Lithuanian nature. The ideal of beauty of our educated class, then being crystallized, was 'like in a photograph.' And this ideal sufficiently satisfied the artists of the first Lithuanian art exhibition. When one observes the groups of our young artists being educated today, one sees clearly that this education takes place from the inside, that there is a striving to make conscious what lies dormant in the character of the Lithuanian countryside."

Even if these judgments may appear too sharp to a historical observer of the development of the young Lithuanian painting, they clearly characterize the negative limits of the most recent, as opposed to all earlier efforts. The positive program of this group, however, becomes clear from

532 the introduction to the proclamation: "We have entered upon a bare and painfully neglected field. Through the /184/ spectacles of the centuries we see in the distance a high artistic culture--the sorrowing Christ (sculpture of folk art, V.J.), the fairy tale, the folk songs. A high artistic heritage, already hidden within the walls of museums or almost destroyed by the wind of our darkness, these things contain in their primitiveness powerful artistic models for us."

The connection with the old Lithuanian folk art thus becomes in these words the program of the newest art. The national idea becomes still clearer in the following: "We have decided to serve this epoch of the reborn fatherland and to create its style. A work of art means a new reality of life. Our ardent striving is directed toward the enrichment of our life through new values. We strive for collaboration with other peoples by contributing our work, which expresses the soul of our people, to the common treasury of art. We recognize the formal victories of the current art, for they grant us greater freedom of creation. But we do not burden our members with any preconceived artistic dogmas. We are filled with the ardent desire that each one of us, according to his individual character and inclinations, may serve the artistic culture of our country."

A whole series of young artists who joined the "Ars" group have had the possibility of independently educating themselves further abroad after completing their training at the art school in Kaunas. Thus the most varied influences of modern artistic trends are expressed in their work.

It would still be premature to pronounce judgment on this most recent development in Lithuanian artistic life. Much is still in flux here. In any case the existence of a serious and pure artistic will which carries the development forward can be stated. Only a later period, looking back, will be able to judge its results.

'0:Baltrusaitis R-4, 5 (no date) 1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

SCULPTURE

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The chapels and crosses shelter small deities, the *"dievukai"* and *"rupintojėliai"*. The Holy Virgins and the Christs, as well as the good popular Saints, take up their quarters under trees, appear in the "cages", hung in trees, conceal themselves in the "cabins". It is perhaps in this imagery in wood that the Lithuanian peasant has done his utmost. A religious art, though not an art of the church, this sculpture spread in spite of the periodical campaigns of the clergy. One inconoclastical crusade follows another, but the work of the "God makers", the *"dievdirbis"*, does not cease. As late as in 1752 the bishop Tiškevičius of Žemaitija preached against this statuary. No doubt he invoked the same reasons as St. Bernhard in his fight against the monsters of the Romanesque churches, excessive freedom of expression and rudeness of features. Such figures were denied benediction and their admission to sanctuaries was forbidden with only two exceptions, a crucifixion and a Christ. All the others populate the fields, the woods and the roads.

Such conflicts have had a profound repercussion on the formation of this art. Driven out of the church popular sculpture cast off the fetters of convention and developed itself freely. The subjects most frequently treated were borrowed from the Gospels and the Apocrypha, as well as from the legend of the Saints. The chief subject taken over from the Gospel was the cycle of the Passion: Pietà, the Virgin of the Seven Sorrows, Christ

1/1 [Errata: should be iconoclastical. Cf. Errata sheet, p. 204, Cat. 116 --- Analyst]

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in a sitting posture or bearing the cross, the Crucifixion. The Pietà remained faithful to its canonical image, as in Western sculpture the Holy Virgin was represented with the body of her Son on her knees. The figure of the Saviour is sometimes quite small in comparison with that of his mother, — he always has remained a child. The Virgin of the Seven Sorrows shows an immense heart pierced by seven flaming swords The sitting Christ is represented as awaiting execution.

The Apocrypha furnished scenes from the education of the Virgin and St. Joseph rocking the Holy Infant. Among the Saints St. George killing the Dragon takes first place, being the patron Saint of the Lithuanian peasant. Then follows St. Isidore, patron Saint of the agricultural labourer with the angel at the plough. The iconography is in general correct. St. Catherine holds the wheel, St. Agatha the bread, St. John Nepomuk a crucifix and a branch. St. Rochus the pilgrim, followed by his dog, covers his crushed leg, St. Francis receives the stygmata. Nevertheless, certain details sound a particular note, the image of Pietà is often blended with that of the Virgin of the Seven Sorrows and an aureole of stars surrounds the Mother of God, while two angels bearing chandeliers stand on each side. Sometimes she is represented with the crown of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania on her head. The sitting Christ, generally represented alone in Western sculpture, is here attended by two hieratic worshipping figures. According to Zemaitic legend this is not a scene of the Passion, but represents Christ returned to earth after his resurrection. He is resting by the wayside and weeping over the misery of mankind. The Christ of

153. „Rūpintojėlis" wood-cut, 18th cent.

[Errata: should be angel at, Cf. Errata sheet, p. 204, cat. 116 --- Analyst]

532 Nazareth has a thick growth of hair, — a reminiscence of a much venerated statue brought from Italy to Vilnius in 1700, — on which the hair was believed to have grown by a miracle. St. Rochus and St. Isidore, having arrived from abroad, wear bowler hats. St. Francis sometimes has a large spoon stuck in his belt. The bread of St. Agatha protects against fire. In case of fire, consecrated bread is carried around the house. St. George is often represented wearing a helmet. It would be easy to multiply these examples.

It was not however these picturesque details which filled the representatives of the church with indignation, but much rather the form, the movement and the treatment of the subject.

Certain figures remind us of the images of Greece of Homer. A rudely shaped trunk has a simple sphere for a head. On other faces a smile of Kozee is frozen. The canon is often irregular, heads either too big or too small, hands sometimes enormous and sometimes atrophied, postures convulsed. It is here in these deformed bodies that the artist gives the measure of his power of expression. Certain heads, e. g. that of the sitting Christ submerged in the mass of his hair, his cheeks stained by gigantic drops of blood, or that of the crucified Christ displaying His large hands, His mouth like an open wound, His eyes scarcely visible, produce a dramatically violent impression. The features of such heads differ widely. Sometimes the heads are supported by long, thin necks, sometimes they are fixed immediately on the trunk with eyes wide open or closed and the mouths distorted in grimace, they are supernatural and yet true. Other figures stiffen in inaccessible gravity like that flat and pale Virgin holding her dead son with the gestures of an automaton.

These figures however belong to two races: at the side of a tormented and monstrous mankind, we see a pastoral and peaceful mankind. There the Saints are peasants, round-cheeked with salient cheekbones and big astonished eyes. This is a homely world. The Pietà is no longer an insensible idol, but a peasant woman who is bending over her son. She is surrounded not by angels, but by winged choirboys. Often she looks like a timid shepherdess hidden behind a fan formed of swords. Such statues are full of good nature and joviality and they are perhaps still more pathetic than the supernatural beings with their exaggerated features. The episodes there are not scenes of family life, an atmosphere of

mystery still persists. The little angel who, with courageous hands, seizes the handle of the plough, resembles a troll in a fairytale. The tale is often told with an epic simplicity and love of detail does not affect the great lines. Quizzical observations assume a new meaning. A miracle performed by a Saint dressed like a village curate, seems to be all the more marvellous. Provided with symbolic attributes such as bread, tools etc. these peasants with the resigned features of the wise and the humble ones, are given the wings of angels and enter into legend.

Such are the principal aspects of this sculpture. At the same time deities and toys, reality and fable, but seldom indifferent, these little statuettes carved in wood affect or terrify us. The reason of the hostility of the clergy in the era of Classicism and afterwards, when countryside churches favored mass production of statues, is easily comprehensible.

The composition and execution of these statues are very varied. We find there all the stages of an evolution which extends from archaism to sophisticated refinement. Forms preserved in the rites of craftsmanship, though wide apart in time, meet again on the same object and are applied in the same workshop. Rigorous geometry, monumental distribution of the masses and the colorful play of agitated surfaces contradict and complete each other.

These statues are hewn by hard and vigorous blows. Synthetic lines simplify the features and sometimes deform them. Details are accentuated by graphic incisions, the polychromy of pure and vivacious colors emphasizes the outlines and plans. A deep sense of architecture is everywhere manifested. Certain extended bodies stiffen into pillars. The legs of a sitting Pietà form a pedestal for the body of Christ. These statues are great in spite of their reduced scale. The wood in them is no longer a senseless material, it helps to animate the features represented. Within the statues the tree trunk is still alive. The priest's vestments resemble a suit made of the bark of a tree. St. George's dragon seems to twist and turn like a tortuous root. These are indeed sylvan deities hewn from a log of wood. Rigidity sometimes disappears to give place to a more flexible treatment. The graphics of the outlines are softened. The masses flow freely in a ripple of lights and shades, a breeze passes over the folded clothing and the outlines sometimes assume an affected grace. In his eagerness to make use of anything he can, the sculptor seeks to exhaust

532 all possibilities and takes his inspiration from every quarter. In his art we find traces of the Western Middle Ages, of the Baroque and even of the rustic toys of the present time. Lost in a world far removed from the highways of history, the village sculptor is often in arrear and sometimes successive epochs and fashions reach him simultaneously. Styles which would exclude each other elsewhere meet here. These different contributions arriving simultaneously enrich his choice. But, though a recipient for different techniques and various styles, the sculptor still remains true to himself. He transposes and adapts without betraying his true personality.

The influence of toys is particulary noticeable in groups the units of which are placed side by side like tin soldiers without any common action to link them together. They are displaced or interchanged, although they are incapable of motion. Such groups of articulated dolls are nevertheless touching in their candour. This series comprises a number of animals, St. George's horse is often a fine pied wooden mount. The two oxen fixed to a board and placed before a plough look like gingerbread beasts. Led by an angel they become God's own beasts. The magic objects of the little ones serve for the worship of the adults.

532 177 Among the Western styles which have exercised the strongest and most lasting influence in this field, the baroque elements and classic art should be mentioned in the first place. Following the Counter Reformation the Jesuits triumphed over all the numerous currents of art in Lithuania. The great European currents penetrated everywhere. Five large religious colleges were established between 1565 and 1575, the largest at Vilnius in 1579. There the latest doctrines were taught and tastes refined. A new age of civilisation began, cathedrals and palaces were built and foreign masters called upon to co-operate. Collections were brought together by the nobility and in the churches. Certain miracle performing statues are still venerated. But the influence of this sculpture is limited chiefly to the propagation of a certain number of iconographic types and plastic themes. The carver in wood is not insensible to this statuary, but his work, although inspired by it, lacks its magnificence. The faces are heavier, the gestures are awkward, the proportions become impersonal. The agitated folds and mystic rays have perhaps been assimilated best. But even amid

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all these luxuriant undulations certain traits seem to be reminiscent of the flamboyant style. There seems to be no doubt that medieval art has exercised the stronger influence. This becomes evident in the very choice of the themes, such as the Passion, the Pietà, the Holy Virgin of the Seven Sorrows, afflicted Christ and in the preference shown for scenes of the childhood of Christ or of the education of St. Mary, in the success of some Saints, such as St. Rochus, the protector against the plague. The cycle of 15th and 16th century subjects is reconstituted. In it we find also the figure of the Devil, with his bat wings, his horns and crooked claws, the demon of Žemaitija hails from the hell of the Middle Ages which classic art did not retain.

This is a strange survival of a vast ancient repertoire. Nothing interfered with its development. In the churches of the towns hardly any traces of it are at present to be found, but the chapels nailed to the trees or built at the roadside are full of such images. They preserve it as a kind of relic of the first Christians in this country. The witnesses of their baptism have never abandoned the Lithuanians.

We know that the religion of the West was introduced at the exact time when this sculpture flourished. The conversion of certain chieftains, such as Mindaugas in 1251 and Gediminas in 1320, did not affect the beliefs of the people. Only in the 15th century the penetration of Christendom became deeper and broader. At first it had to adapt itself to local traditions, to allow itself to be mixed with local legends, later transforming and renewing the ancient faith. No doubt the wooden Gothic Saints were heartily welcomed in this country of trees. The popular pathos which developed in the last years of the Middle Ages, with its sense for melodrama and its love of anecdotes which go right to the heart of the peasant, has certainly also largely contributed to further the new propagation of these ancient forms.

These have left a profound impression on the sculpture of this country. Even the statues copied from the classic baroque monuments often show a touch of it. Medieval man survived in our makers of images. But this is not only the man of the 15th century, a more archaic and unknown Middle Age also survives in him. The oversized deities and the statues bearing

532 clumsy heads are sometimes more akin to the characters of the 12th cen-
177 tury, than to those of the great Gothic altar pieces. They show identical deformations and their movements are the same, angular and rigid. There too the supernatural world of fairytales reigns. Elongated shapes frozen in a trunk, remind one the statue pillar of Chartres. As they do in architectural ornamentation, vertical folds form real streaks. Certain crucifixes show the same violence as the Christ of Perpignan. If a Romanesque sculptor had had to represent a group of the Pietà, he would have done it in the same manner as shown by a group in which a stiff St. Mary holds the body of her child with arms and legs rigid, broken into a rectangle and supported by the massive pedestal formed by the Virgin's knees. The Virgins of Auvergne reappear in certain sitting Virgins. But these insensible idols are but distant relatives of Sainte Foy of Conques, sometimes adorned with necklaces, and they have no historical connection with her. There has been no transmission, but an accidental coincidence of conception.

When carving a Gothic saint from his log, the *dievdirbis* to a certain extent unveils his past. The energetic tool of the peasant rips off the bark formed in the course of years and lays bare the primitive form. Square images issue from opulent statues. The outlines are simplified and schematized. In the suffering features of Christ are expressed the ferocious features of a more ancient god. Movements again become jerky, the bodies stiffen, become shorter or longer and again attain the coarseness and power of bygone days. The rudeness of the means, the necessity of solid construction, the innate taste for geometric forms, coupled with a craving for the strange and the supernatural, bring about the same deformations as we find in the statuary of the 12th century, certain aspects of which also show popular traits. The hermit of the Nemunas river dreams the same dreams as the makers of images and the monks who once decorated the small Romanesque churches. It is this fraternity of forms and of technique, which has made it possible to reconstruct an ancient and unknown world.

Strange contradictions thus characterize the principal aspects of this sculpture. It is somewhat indifferent with regard to the great Western currents which have left fine traces in this country. It bears deep marks of an
532 epoch of which we possess but few monuments. And finally it shows certain striking affinities with an art which had never been known in these regi-

ons. But, most of all, it belongs to the forest. Its statuettes still show the structure and retain the fragrance of newly hewn wood. Even in our days the *dievukai* have not changed. It is this faithfulness towards the world into which they were born which alone can explain their permanence.

● 532

10:Baltrušaitis R-4, 5 (no date) 1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

PAINTING AND ENGRAVING

532 Painting has a character different from that of sculpture. Though a religious art too, it has less stable traditions and more spontaneous techniques. The pictures are generally painted on wooden panels covered with a plastering of stucco, but also sometimes on tissue, on glass or even on paper. The artist himself prepared his colors with oil or eggs. The subjects did not differ much from those of the statuary. Several compositions: St. George, who figures in nearly all *sumai* of Žemaitija, the Crucifixion, the Pietà, the Virgin of the Seven Sorrows and St. Rochus, are often directly inspired by them. Sacred images to be found in the churches or illustrating books also served as models, but the themes were not always faithfully reproduced. New designs appeared and some of them are of a charming naiveté, as for example the hands of the Lord emerging from a bank of clouds and throwing big loaves of bread to the kneeling peasants. The design has however no stability, the composition is irregular, the gamut of colors is limited to two or three tones. These very shortcomings give them their poetic charm. As painted by the "douanier Rousseau" of the village, Christ and the Saints are near to the people, their awkwardness gives them more truth than a correct design would have been able to do. Sometimes the traits are more definite, thick contours emphasize the outline and the decorative effect In most cases these engravings hail from Lower Lithuania and the most ancient samples which have been preserved date from the beginning of grows more distinct. The splashes of color are distributed with generosity, 1

1 [Errata; transport lines 21 and 23 from p. 62 to the beginning of p. 64. Cf. Errata Sheet, p. 204, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

10:Baltrusaitis R-4, 5 (no date)1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

oversized flowers and ornaments appear on the clothes at the will of the brush. A riper art however manifests itself in engravings. 532

Here too the artist is inspired by the wood. As in painting the elements of technique are introduced by the currents of Western Art. 532 177 To be sure, at first copies were made of the incunabula and the illustrated books collected by the clergy, but new sources of inspiration were soon found. Engravings came from Germany and further distant lands. A number of compositions were inspired by works of French popular art, and may be the trade in playing cards, that were also engraved on wood, had its share in their diffusion. Epinal pictures may also have followed the same channels.

154. The Crucifixion, wood-cut, 18th cent

1/ [Errata: should be the. Cf. Errata sheet, p. 204, Cat. 116. --- Analyst]

532 1 the 17th century. One St. George is dated 1710, and the most recent sheet dates from 1853. From 1865 until 1904 this production was practically stopped by the Russian *ukase* on printing. During that time only a few new editions with changed inscriptions have been issued. And since the end of the period of suppression this art seems to have been unable to recover. At present a large part of the originals and of the printed copies is in Germany, many are in Poland and only a few have remained in Lithuania.

The subjects are exclusively of a religious or didactic character. Among the themes treated in common with sculpture, we again find St. George, Christ at Nazareth, St. John of Nepomuk, St. Anne, stygmatized St. Francis, in short, all the familiar figures, but on the one hand the composition is not always the same, and on the other, there is a much larger variety of prototypes. Not only drawings were made of venerated statues, but also of etchings, popular engravings, paintings by old masters, such as a Christ attributed to Roger van der Weyden, which had been at Vilnius, the Coronation of the Holy Virgin by Rubens, certain compositions of Paolo Veronese, copied from deformed reproductions thereof, a Crucifixion by Dürer. Such copies were far from being true and sometimes whole parts are missing. Cuts were made and also additions. On the same panel fragments of various origin are thrown into one. Famous works copied from inexact models often become irrecognizable.

The procedure followed by the artist is very simple. On a wooden panel usually of lime prepared a long time in advance, a coat of wax and chalk was spread, on which the delineation was drawn by means of a pencil or a pen. The design was then carved with a knife. The typographic ink stamped in large slabs often exceeds the contours. The copies were printed on a rudimentary press or by application of the paper. The engravings are sometimes colored by hand. There are large compositions requiring a juxtaposition of several panels, the height of which sometimes attains one meter. Sometimes it is a group, sometimes a single figure, sometimes a succession of scenes set side by side or above each other. In the first case a crowd of figures suggestive of a miniature is represented.

The laboriously handled tool traced energetic, irregular lines devoid of grace. Series of parallel lines indicate the various shades and define the outline. Heaven and clouds, sun rays and trees, in short, the whole sur-

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1 [As per errata (cat. 116, p. 204), see cat. 532, p. 62 for beginning of sentence (line 21-23) -- Analyst]

10:Baltrusaitis R-4, 5 (no date)1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

532

155. The Holy Family, wood-cut

532 roundings of the world in which the persons represented live, are indicated by the same awkward method. Everything is equally filled in. The forms squeeze each other and even invade the background. The horror of the vacuum of archaic art is here combined with baroque profusion. All the figures are aligned on the same plane. Hierarchic distribution according to schedule creates around the principal hero a space devoid of depth, in which, as on a stage, churches and houses, hills and plants are thronged together. An ordinary man is only half the size of a Saint. Nature is reduced to symbolic ornament, flowers such as adorn trunks, broad leaves on their stems. It is an abridged landscape. Sometimes a perspective of a sort is indicated, but the fields rise as on an arras hung on a wall or form a pedestal for the scenes represented. The characters do not live in a real world, but amidst garlands, glories, rays, cascades of stars and clouds resembling a circus of chaotic rocks. In spite of this baroque luxury, there still prevails a heaviness and hardness of expression suggestive more of the Middle Ages than the classic century.

In this framework of superimposed zones with all the attributes of ancient mysteries, in a system ruled by the old dogmas, the angels and the Madonnas once more find the atmosphere of Gothic drama. As in sculpture the artist spontaneously invokes the spirit of another age. Notwithstanding this unity of character and technique it is possible to discern several currents; a severe style, a flowery style and a sumptuous style. The severe style is evidenced especially in subjects borrowed from sculpture. An image reproducing a rustic deity remains impregnated by its coarseness, the Christ of Nazareth, erect with tied hands and an oversized head, is drawn with a few strokes only, a monumental figure placed in a niche. The etching all around intensifies its shadow and gives the body the aspect of a tree trunk. The same arrangement prevails in other scenes, all the numerous figures are placed on superimposed levels, without losing their frontal attitude. Their coarse and dense masses are pressed in a frame that seems not to have been made to their measure. The flowery style is also used in large and full compositions. Small fragile figures would not have been adequate for its vegetation. Leaves and petals are strewn upon their clothes. Uniform surfaces are replaced by a bed of flowers, a kind of luxuriant carpet. Our Lady of Loretto, decorated like a Virgin in a reliquary, is surrounded by the garland of a mystic rosary

adorned with medallions. St. John of Nepomuk seems to grow out of a 532
flower basket. Elsewhere stars resembling sunflowers dot the firmament. In this luxuriant garden the figures however maintain their robust character. This stability gives way only under the weight of the rays and folds which streak and break up the surface in all directions. The Saints both male and female, become larger and fatter. Little full cheeked angels emerge from the clouds. Clothes puff up. This heavy and awkward whirl is what may be described as baroque.

The sense of the monumental only disappears completely from sheets on which several scenes are represented; the panel is made up of several parts, each of which represents one or several independent compositions, it is a mosaic of paintings framed in a ribbon composed of foliage and flowers. The drawing becomes schematic, the descriptive element prevails, but there is no continuity in the narrative. The fragments of a film are placed side by side, sometimes without sequence. Elements of the same group are not always linked together, they form several distinct rows. As in small statuary comprizing several figures, the movements are stiff, a recumbent figure is drawn with the same outlines as an erect figure. One might think that it had been knocked down. As represented in this little world, Sacred History and sermons assume the character of rustic tales.

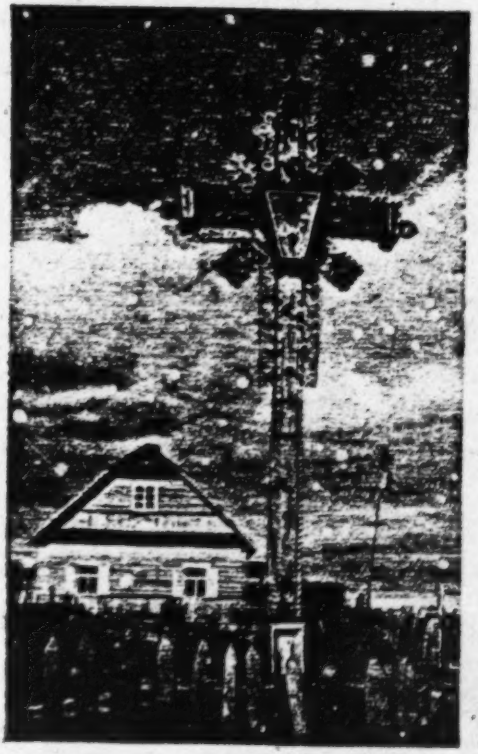
These apparently contradictory characters are sometimes present in one and the same work. The figure of St. George of 1710, the most ancient and one of the most beautiful that have come down to us, impresses both by the amplitude of its conception and by the abundance of detail. On this large sheet is seen a knight in full armour, ostrich feathers waving from his helmet, careering with his cloak flying in the wind on a pied steed with short legs awkwardly attached. He is spearing a medieval dragon, ferocious and ridiculous at the same time. All around him, in the rare empty spaces left by the main subject, between the legs of his horse and round about its tail and its head, are crowded small houses, suspended in empty space, a small queen crowned by angels and plants. Being himself of supernatural stature the Saint has to fight his way in an overcrowded world. By its theme, as well as by its execution, this engraving, in which a childish gravity is mingled with flowers and vast undulations, may be said to recapitulate and illustrate all the various aspects of the whole of Lithuanian imagery.

11:League of Nations G-4 (no date) 1939 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

IX. PEASANT ART AND FOLKLORE. ORGANISATION OF LEISURE

532 From time immemorial, the villagers have been fond of manual work. By the roadside, religious monuments decorated with original designs may be seen, such as crosses and chapels; in the villages, wooden churches and belfries and attractive wooden buildings, with original carvings, have been erected.

[415] In the houses themselves, the equipment and the domestic utensils are also made by hand. Furniture, spindles, linen-beaters, towel-pegs, nut-crackers are characteristic objects of peasant art. The girls were always fond of spinning, weaving and [286] knitting. When they married, they brought with them from their home a generous supply of cloth, towels, table-cloths, bed-covers, gaily coloured dresses, etc. At weddings, in particular, it was the custom to make presents of belts, towels, cloth, etc.



Crucifix.

After the world war, when Lithuania became independent, the cultural level rose; the old articles of peasant art, with their primitive forms, no longer fulfilled modern requirements. The Chamber of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Union of Young Farmers' Clubs, accordingly endeavoured to encourage cottage handicrafts, adapting them to modern conditions.

A series of courses was organised for peasant craftsmen, to teach them new methods and familiarise them with modern tools, better raw materials and modern shapes (for which artists prepared designs based on the traditional peasant styles.

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The Chamber of Agriculture is conducting systematic propaganda to disseminate the new peasant art among the population; books and articles are published, talks broadcast, exhibitions organised, sample designs popularised, etc. The chief publications of the Chamber of Agriculture are the *Sodžiaus Menas* (peasant art) series, six volumes of which (5,000 copies each) have been published up to date, containing descriptions of peasant art with illustrations, and the *Sodžiaus Pramonė* (peasant industries) series, three volumes of which have appeared containing descriptions and examples of new peasant work. 532

Thanks to these measures, the wearing of the national dress and the tendency to give an original national character to house interiors has become more widespread and there has been a real revival of national peasant art.

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The folklore is rich and varied. The popular songs ("Dainos") have lost none of their freshness. It is over a century since special interest was first taken in them and steps were taken to collect them; about 150,000 variants of these popular songs have now been collected. 533

The genre most frequently found is the ballad, a simple, sincere and artless recital about a youth and a maiden; the relations between the members of the family are depicted with real delicacy and feeling — the daily joys and sorrows and conflicts of parents and children, brother and sister, husband and wife. Among the ceremonial songs, nuptial songs are very frequent. Wedding celebrations, which used to last a week, formerly followed an elaborate ceremonial, including songs, speeches, laments and dramatic dialogues. In all these songs, the difference is stressed between the life of the unmarried girl and that of the married woman, the former being described as happy and carefree, while the latter is depicted in more sombre colours. Working songs are also numerous; some are primitive, as regards both the words and the air. The songs about the rye harvest and the "harvest home" also occupy an important place. Part-songs *(sutarlinės)* are sung by two, three or four women's voices; one begins, and another joins in with the same or a related melody. This original and popular form of singing, of very ancient origin, is now dying out.

The ancient popular instrumental music, played on the "kanklės" (a kind of cither) and on the "skudučiai" (pipe), was very much on the lines of the part-singing.

The latter was accompanied by dancing. The traditional dances and games were not performed in couples but in groups, in the form of slow walks accompanied by singing but not music

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[For additional examples of representative art, appended to the text, see category 116, pages 113-148.]